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DEC 1981

Six farms chosen for 1982 farm tour

Six Appomattox County farms have been chosen to be featured in the 1982 Virginia Farm Management Tour, slated to be held in this county on July 17, 1982.

The owners of the six farms were guests of the 1982 Virginia Farm Management Tour steering committee at a get acquainted and tour orientation meeting held in town recently.

The six farms chosen for the 1981 tour are the Torrence Farm, the Hix Brothers farm, Maple Hill Farm, the Clarence Jones Farm, Edlee Acres, and Wildwood Farm.

The Torrence Farm is operated an managed by Dennis Torrence, a former agricultural teacher and chairman of the Robert E. Lee Soil and Water Conservation District.

There are 265 acres on the home farm, including 55 acres in cropland, 74 acres pastureland and 136 acres in forestry. In addition, 60 acres of cropland and 68 acres of pastureland are rented.

Income on the Torrence farm is essentially from milk sales, and there are currently about 52 head of cattle being milked, and 58 heifers on hand, some to be kept for replacement purposes.

The Hix Brothers Farm is a 1,100 acre dairy operation run by John and William Hix.

John and William are both actively involved in community activities and churches. William has been on the county ASCS Committee for a number of years, and John has served as vice president of the Appomattox County Farm Bureau, and currently serves as president of the Appomattox Dairyman's Association.

The 120 cows milked on this farm comprise the highest producing herd in Appomattox.

This farm incorporates some unique conservation practices, and John Hix was recently cited as conservationist for the year and attended the Goodyear Conservation Award Dinner with Dennis Torrence in Phoenix, Arix.

Maple Hill Farm is owned and operated by Carter Martin. It is a 280-acre spread, including 165 acres of open ground,a four acre dark tobacco allotment, 12 acres of corn, 12 acres of wheat and 25 acres of hay. He keeps about 50 brood cows.

Carter comes from a family noted for its ability to grow and cure dark tobacco. There's an art in curing dark tobacco, and this man is an artist. Martin is a recognized authority on the subject of curing dark tobacco, and last year the governor called Carter and asked him if he would serve on the Virginia Dark Fire Tobacco Commission.

The income on this farm comes from tobacco, the sale of seattle, the sale of wheat and occasionally red clover seed.

Maple Hill Farm is a typical general farm for this region of Virginia.

The Clarence Jones farm is the largest tobacco farm in Appomattox County. Jones grows slightly more than 60 acres of tobacco, including 48 acres of flue-cured tobacco, 10 acres of dark tobacco, and twop and one-half acres if leased burley tobacco.

This well managed farm consists of 363 acres of land, with approximately 200 acres of open land. Jones usually grows about 100 acres of wheat. He has five bulk barns and numerous tractors. Jones is noted for his ability to take an old used tractor, get it in good repair, paint it up and have it looking and running like new.

Jones has a good knowledge of tobacco. He knows what varieties to grow, and he keeps abreast of new developments in insecticides, fungicides, and other chemicals. His is a very specialized operation.

Edlee Acres is a purebred Angus operation owned and operated by Ed and Lee Ann Anderson, who have been on the farm for ten years.

This was a dairy farm before the Andersons came into the community. It is comprised of 250 acres, including approximately 180 acres open. They normally grow about ten acres of corn, and hay is made from fescue and clover.

There are currently 40 adult cows on the farm, and by the tour time, there should be 50. There are no bulls in the herd, all the cows are synchronized and bred totally by artificial insemination.

This is an outstanding group of Angus cows, all large, averaging about 1,200 pounds.

Ed is a member of the Angus Herd Improvement Record Program. He and his son, Andy, operate the farm together.

The Wildwood Farm is representative of the 70 percent of Appomattox County which is in forestry. The 908 acre operation is owned and operated by John and Phil Harrison.

There is a beef herd on this farm, 300 acres of open land and 100 acres of crop land.

Over the years, 190 acres of loblolly pines have been planted on the farm. In addition, 34 acres will be planted next spring. The farm offers a good overview of the various stages of development in a long-term plantation.

Getting Acquainted

FAMILIES OF THE six farms chosen to be featured in the 1982 Virginia Farm Management Tour talk with each other and members of the tour's steering committee after a recent get-acquainted meeting. The tour, which will be held in Appomatox County next July, will focus on management practices of six local farming operations. (Photo by Bill Sherrod)

Soil & Water Conservation

Torrence is chosen to lead district

Dennis Torrence

Dennis Wayne Torrence of Appomattox was elected Chairman of the Robert E. Lee Soil & Water Conservation District at the December meeting. The District includes the Counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Campbell and the City of Lynchburg. Torrence is a 1963 graduate of VPI with a B.S. Degree in Agricultural Education. He attended the University of Maryland in 1968 where he received a Master of Science Degree in Agricultural Education.

Torrence taught Vocational Agriculture at Appomattox County High School for 13 years before entering full-time farming. He presently belongs to the Appomattox FFA Alumni Association, Appomattox Dairy Association and Appomattox Farm Bureau. He operates the "Torrence Farm" with his Father.

Other officers elected were Vice Chairman-Marvin Gibson, Concord, Farmer; Secretary-Frank Sweet, Pamplin, Extension Service; Treasurer-Douglas Crowther, Concord, Engineer with Babcock & Wilcox Co. Other Directors of the District are W. Scott Barnes and H. S. Myers, III, Amherst; E. Carter Martin, Appomattox; J. Herbert Carwile, Campbell; Dr. Robert L. Hill and Dr. Franklin F. Flint, Lynchburg. Dr. Flint, past Chairman of the District, has been elected President of the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts.

The District endorsed Amherst County's application to the Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Commission for a low interest loan to be used in construction of the Buffalo River Project. The ground breaking ceremony for the Mill Creek Site 4A of the Buffalo River Project will be January 6.

Also discussed by the District was the preparation of a conservation exhibit for the Farm Management Tour to be held in Appomattox, July 17.

The Soil Survey for Appomattox County is expected to begin this summer. The Soil Survey will be a cooperative undertaking between the County, Virginia Tech, Extension Service and the Soil Conservation Service.

J. H. Carwile reported that the Central Virginia Planning District Commission is engaged in several conservation activities. A Hazardous Waste Task Force is studying and will make recommendations for disposing of toxic wastes.

There are four new District cooperators this month. Three in Appomattox County-A. H. & W. H. Carter, Henry Herbert, J. B. Kinder and one in Campbell County-W. G. Jennings, Jr. These make about 740 cooperators who agree to voluntarily carry out a conservation program for their lands. Chairman Torrence commends these for their interest in conservation.

The District reminds those who wish to comment on the proposed conservation program how they must do so by January 15. The proposed national conservation program would increase the roles of local and state governments in conservation work and target a greater share of USDA dollars and people to critical resources problems and areas.

For more information on the program and to obtain a response form for mailing your comments, contact your local Soil Conservation Service for Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office.

Irene Mays enjoys caring for 'doll family'

By FRANCES H. PAULETTE

If, by some chance, while making his annual visit to all the boys and girls on Christmas Eve, Santa discovers he is short a few dolls, then he might do well to consider making a stop in Appomattox to remedy the situation.

On a certain high, windy hill just outside the town of Appomattox there lives a lady with lots and lots of dolls. Big dolls, little dolls, baby dolls, lady dolls, boy dolls and girls dolls.....they're all there.

Irene Page Mays loved dolls as a little girl and she still loves dolls today. She doesn't play with dolls anymore because she is the mother of four grown children and five grandsons. She does, however, like to collect dolls and dress them herself.

All of the approximately 40 dolls in her collection have been dressed by Irene. She designs and makes the outfits, whether they're for a baby doll or an elegant dancing doll with frosted hair. She has one of these and it's dressed accordingly.

Only one doll in her collection is dressed in an outfit that was not designed and created by her own hands. That doll, a lovely, 'grown up' type doll with a ceramic or china face was a gift to Irene from one of her sons, Monte Mays. The Mays' are the parents of another son, Irie.

One of the most interesting dolls in the collection is a very plain little rag doll with features painted on in a very crude manner. It is kind of special. It belonged to her husband, Gilbert, when he was very young.

It seems that every so often Gilbert would cry for the opportunity to play with the doll belonging to his sister. But, as loudly or as long as he pleased, his sister would never let him have her doll, not even for a few minutes.

One day, when little Gilbert again got the urge to play with the doll belonging to his sister, a lady, Mrs. John Gilley was visiting in the Mays' home. Hearing the little fellow crying for the doll she said, "If you'll just stop crying, I'll make you a doll when I get home, I promise." She kept her promise.

The body of the little rag doll is carefully and lovingly hand sewn and the head is created of white material with features carefully drawn with ink or some sort of crayon.

One can easily tell the little doll has been loved and enjoyed because it is well worn. When the little boy grew up a bit, he discarded the litle rag doll for more masculine toys but the little doll remained in the family. Today, the little doll has new clothing, carefully fashioned by Irene but the little face is the same as it was many years ago.

One of the most beautiful dolls in the collection is a tall bride doll. She stands resplendent in bridal gown complete with veil. The gown is fashioned of white satin with long sleeves ending in lace cuffs. Her skirt is adorned with several rows of lace and the same lace embarrces the neckline. The veil of illusion is edged in the same lace. She is wearing undergarments that Irene carefully designed along with the bridal attire."

There, however, is something very special about the bridal doll. Her elegant costume is fashioned from scraps of material that Irene used in the creating of the wedding gowns worn by her two daughters, Carolyn Mays Kelly and Lois Mays Johnson.

Several of the dolls in the collection had been abandoned when they came into Irene's possession. These she calls her "Orphan Dolls". One doll had to have the body restuffed and another had to have major repairs. All of this Irene does before she begins to create a wardrobe for the doll.

Some of the dolls are elegantly dressed in old fashioned costumes complete with lace pantaloons. Other have more modern costumes.

Irene has been very careful to dress the dolls according to the kind and age group the particular doll represents. For instance, the simple little rag doll is clad in a simple print "everyday type" dress. The doll with the long frosted hair is very elegant and Irene has dubbed her "my exotic dancing doll." She is attired in a long ballroom gown.

One of the most winsome dolls is a baby doll with blond hair; she is dressed in a pink dress with matching pink pants trimmed in the same lace that complements the dress.

Among her "Orphans" is a doll that has chewed ears and chewed fingers. This didn't keep Irene from doing her best.....the little doll id dressed elegantly, right down to her "chewed" finger tips!

Will she keep on collecting dolls? Most likely. Irene Mays loves to sew and whenever she happens on a doll that needs a home or clothing I'm sure she'll add another member to her doll family.

SURROUNDED BY A FEW OF THE 40 DOLLS in her collection, Mrs. Irene Page Mays (Mrs. Gilbert Mays) stands at the foot of a bed on which she displays the entire collection of dolls. The basement of the Mays home, as well as the upper floor is filled with antiques she has refinished. Always on the lookout for antiques at auction sales Mrs. Mays enjoys refinishing antiques almost as much as collecting dolls. (Photo by Frances H. Paulette)

Father Darkleaf

By CALVIN ROBINSON

Merry Christmas!

According to my almanac, Winter arrived at 5:51 p.m. Monday. And Monday was my birthday. My recent extended spell of arthritis is some better and I have hopes of getting around town one evening this week to see the home decorations, tree lights. Am sure there will be many family gatherings and lots of former residents and relatives "home" for the holiday. Let's make it the best ever. As this is written there is no sign of melting snow and the thermometer on my porch was down to a bit below ten degrees first of the week. Last time I was out, saw several people hauling live Christmas trees in pick-up trucks, others had trees stuffed in car trunks. Oh, Appomattox is ready. If'n you see Santa Claus, tell him there is a believer on Martha Street.

Christmas should find us taking time to be thankful for our blessings. On that our nation should be united. I had a note in my notebook saying that the most united our nation has ever been in my time, other than in war, was at 6:45 p.m. week nights, when every radio set was tuned in to listen to Amos 'n Andy, in the 30's and 40's. Remember?

* * *

Good time to catch up on reading. I have been re-reading The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table by Olvier Wendell Holmes. Here is a quotation: "Knowledge and timber shouldn't be much used till they are seasoned." Ah yes, I always ranked "well done, medium and rare" in that order. Certainly as applies to doing your job.

* * *

Do not forget to say Thank you to those who have rendered service and friendship. Your favorite clerk, checker, service station attendant, store employee, bank teller, town employee, officeholder, resque squad and firemen, mailman, post office worker, nurses, doctors, minister. Enough to go around.

* * *

Monday was also the birthday of my friend, Joe Cobb. Congratulations and to a much younger Saggitarian.

* * *

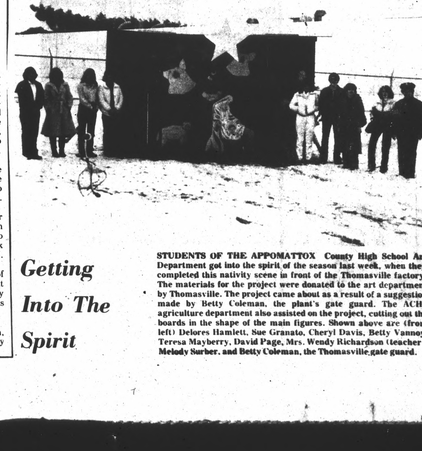
So much to put into a Letter to Santa Claus, but one item I'd surely want in would to ask that the Lawrence Welk program get back on area TV.

* * *

Picked up a couple of calendars for 1982. Find that next year the Fourth of July comes on a Sunday. Christmas Day will be on a Saturday.

* * *

I'll sign off like I began, Thanks for reading and Merry Christmas.



Getting Into The Spirit

STUDENTS OF THE APPOMATTOX County High School Art Department got into the spirit of the season last week, when they completed this nativity scene in front of the Thomasville factory. The materials for the project were donated to the art department by Thomasville. The project came about as a result of a suggestion made by Betty Coleman, the plant's gate guard. The ACHS agriculture department also assisted on the project, cutting on the boards in the shape of the main figures. Shown above are (from left) Delores Hamlett, Sue Granato, Cheryl Davis, Betty Vanney, Teresa Mayberry, David Page, Mrs. Wendy Richardson (teacher), Melody Surber, and Betty Coleman, the Thomasville gate guard.